

Highlights

KINGS CANYON



BEFORE EXPLORING: Review safety advice on page 5. Carry a map, warm clothes, and water. Orient yourself before heading out and tell someone where you are going. You are on your own in the winter woods — be safe!

GRANT GROVE

Kings Canyon Visitor Center: See the exhibits and film, just a year old now, to get to know this park as you never have before.



Walkers & snowshoers: The only plowed trail is the Grant Tree loop. Beware of ice! When snow covers other trails, give skis or snowshoes a

try! Rent them at Grant Grove Market. Buy a ski trail map and follow the colored markers on trees. See pages 8-9 for details on snowplay areas.

Avoid walking in ski tracks. Your footprints harden and catch ski tips, making it dangerous for skiers.

Watch for wildlife tracks in the snow. Deer, mountain lions, bobcats, martens, weasels, coyotes, and Douglas squirrels (or chickarees)—even bears—may be active all year; so continue to store food properly.

Winter birds may greet you from

the trees: ravens, juncos, chickadees, red-breasted nuthatches, brown creepers, and white-headed woodpeckers, to name a few. Look for the sweep of wings in the snow where an owl caught a rodent for dinner.

TALKS & SNOWSHOE WALKS:

Check local schedules to see if a ranger-led walk is taking place. Snowshoes are loaned for free!

GENERAL GRANT TREE: The only trail in the area that is plowed in winter. General Grant is the world's third-largest living tree and the only living shrine to those who died in war (see *82nd Annual* story to the right). Visit historic Gamlin Cabin and the Fallen Monarch along this 1/3-mile (.5 km) paved trail. A guide is sold at the visitor center. North and west of the visitor center 1 mile (1.6 km) round trip.

PANORAMIC POINT ROAD:

Once snow flies this becomes a ski or snowshoe trail to a spectacular vista of the High Sierra. Park at Grant Village, go east through the visitor center parking lot, left around the meadow, then right at the sign "Panoramic Point 2.3 miles (3.7 km)." It's 1/4 mile (.4 km) up to the viewpoint. The 4-mile (6.4 km) round-trip Park Ridge Trail begins here.

NEARBY VIEWPOINTS

OVERLOOKS & VIEWS: For a

view of the High Sierra, drive to **Kings Canyon Overlook**, about 6 miles (9.5 km) south of Grant Grove on the Generals Highway.

For a look down into the Kings Canyon, visit **Junction View**, 11 miles (15.5 km) north of Grant Grove on Hwy 180.

About 6 miles (9.5 km) south of Grant Grove, across the Generals Highway from the Quail Flat junction, **Redwood Canyon Overlook** faces west over one of the world's largest sequoia groves. Early studies in this grove revealed the strong positive relationship between fire and sequoia reproduction.

USFS NATIONAL FOREST

Explore some of Giant Sequoia National Monument, a part of Sequoia National Forest (see page 2 for details). Check page 5 for road closures.

Three USFS trailheads offer snowplay, cross-country ski trails, and snowmobile routes. Rent skis, snowshoes, or buy snowplay equipment at Grant Grove or Montecito Lake Resort (see page 9 for details). Ask for information and a map at Kings Canyon Visitor Center:

- **Cherry Gap** is on Highway 180

2.5 miles (4km) north of Grant Grove. It offers 10 miles (16km) of marked winter routes, including a ski trail to the Chicago Stump at the edge of Converse Basin grove. Virtually every mature sequoia in this huge grove was felled early in the 1900s. The stump is a remnant of a tree taken to exhibit at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.

South of Grant Grove on the Generals Highway are two trailheads with restrooms:

- **Quail Flat** (6 miles/9.6km south of Hwy 180) has 23 miles (37km) of trails and snowmobile routes. Some connect to Big Meadows.
- **Big Meadows** (8 miles/13km south of Hwy 180) offers 23 miles (37km) of marked, groomed trails and routes that traverse meadows and forest. One route goes to the 1916 Buck Rock Fire Lookout (the tower is closed in winter).

THE FLOOR OF KINGS CANYON

Highway 180 down into the canyon closes in winter due to falling rock. You can get some good views out over the canyon between Grant Grove and the Hume Lake junction. The road reopens mid-April; return then if you can to enjoy one of our nation's deepest gorges. See page 9 "In the Kings Canyon" for details.



82nd Annual Nation's Christmas Tree Ceremony

at the base of the General Grant Tree

December 9, 2007 at 2:30 pm

(held annually on the second Sunday of December).

This event celebrates both the season and two special honors given to the Grant Tree: President Coolidge designated it the official Nation's Christmas Tree in 1926 (the "National Christmas Tree" is lit on the Mall in Washington, D.C.). In 1956, President Dwight Eisenhower proclaimed the tree the only living National Shrine, and had his personal representative, Fleet Admiral Nimitz, officially dedicate it on Veteran's Day that year.

Each year during the ceremony, National Park Rangers place a large wreath at the base of this giant sequoia in memory of men and women who gave their lives in service to their country. Caroling and readings are also part of the ceremony.

The event is sponsored by the Sanger Chamber of Commerce. Parking is limited. Chartered buses from Sanger are available. Information: 559-875-4575.